(b) whether it is also a fact that among the 20 countries, where four-fifths of all undernourished children live, India is home to the largest number of undernourished children;

(c) whether the last round of the National Family Health Survey shows that malnutrition has reduced by just one per cent during the last eight years; and

(d) if so, the action proposed in this matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MATIRENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) Yes, Sir. India has a number of eminent scientists in the field of nutrition. However, Malnutrition is a multifaceted problem, the determinants of which vary from food insecurity, female illiteracy, poor access to health-care, safe drinking water, sanitation and poor purchasing power. Early marriages of girls, teenage pregnancies resulting in low birth weight of the new boms, poor breast feeding and complementary feeding paractices, ignorance about nutritional needs of infants and young children and repeated infections further aggravate the situation.

(b) As per the Lancet's Series on Maternal and Child Malnutrition, 80% of the World's undernourished children live in just 20 countries but the country wise information is not available.

(c) As per National Family Health Survey (NFHS) -2 (1998-99) conducted by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 47% children are underweight while NFHS-3 (2005-06) has reported that 46% children are underweight. This data is as per the National Centre for Health Statistics (NCHS) standards. However, as per New WHO Growth Standards, 43% children are underweight according to NFHS-2, while 40% children are underweight as per NFHS-3.

(d) The Government is seized of the problem of malnutrition and is implementing a number of schemes throughout the country, which directly or indirectly improve the nutritional status of women and children. Some of these are as under:

(i) Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme (Ministry of Women and Child Development);

The steps taken in the recent past to increase the effectiveness of the delivery of services under ICDS includes:

The scheme has been expanded twice in the year 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 during the Tenth Five Year Plan.

The Government has doubled the financial norms for supplementary nutrition from Re. 1 to Rs. *21*- per beneficiary per day.

From the year 2005-06,50% cost of supplementary nutrition is also being shared with the States/UTs.

Constant emphasis on States to:

Ensure regular supply of supplementary nutrition as per schematic norms.

Ensure efective convergence of health, nutrition, education and safe drinking water services under various programmes.

Generate nutrition awareness.

(ii) National Programme for Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid Day Meal Scheme) [Department of School Education & Literacy);

(iii) Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls in 51 districts to provide free foodgrains to undernourished adolescent girls (Ministry of Women & Child Development);

(iv) Nutrition Education and Training Programmes of Food and Nutrition Board (Ministry of Women & Child Development);

(v) Reproductive and Child Health (RCH-II) Programme under National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) including:

(Ministry of Health & Family Welfare):

Maternal Health by promoting institutional deliveries, improved coverage and quality of Ante Natal Care (ANC), skilled care to pregnant women, Post-partum care at Community level.
Immunization.
Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illnesses and Malnutrition. Emphasis on Infant & Young Child Feeding.
Specific Programmes to prevent and combat micronutrient deficiencies of Vatamin A and Iron & Folic Acid through Vitamin A Supplementation for children till the age of 5 years and Iron & Folic Acid Supplementation for preschool children, pregnant and lactating women.

(vi) National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme (Ministry of Health & Family Welfare);

(vii) Targetted Public Distribution System (Department of Food & Public Distribution);

(viii) Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme/Swajaldhara and Total Sanitation Campaign; National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (Ministry of Rural Development);

Universalisation of ICDS

1077. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether India ranks 94 in the Global Hunger Index, mainly because of prevalence of under nourishment in children, who are supposed to be future asset of the country; if so, by when Government is going to universalize the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme; and

(b) what steps have been taken for improvement of condition of Anganwadi Workers who are driving force to run the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) Yes, Sir. India ranks 94th in the Global Hunger Index (GHI), the indicators for which are the proportion of undernourished as a percentage of the population, the prevalence of underweight in the children under the age of five and under five mortality rate. It is to meet this challenge that the Government, in pursuance of its commitment to universalize the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme as envisaged in the National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP), has

expanded the Scheme twice in the year 2005-06 and 2006-07. With these expansions, the total number of ICDS Projects, Anganwadi Centres and Mini-Anganwadi Centres has increased to 6284,10.53 lakhs and 36829 respectively.

To cover the, hitherto, uncovered habitations across the country, the proposal for 792 additional Projects, 2.13 lakh Anganwadi Centres and 77053 Mini-Anganwadi Centres under 3rd Phase expansion is underway.

(b) Government is fully conscious of the efforts put in by these honorary workers and therefore continuous efforts have been made to improve their working conditions by increase in their honoraria from time to time and extending facilities such as paid absence on maternity, insurance cover under the Anganwadi Karyakartri Bima Yojana, reservation of 25% of vacant posts of Supervisors for Anganwadi Workers, recruitment of 25% Anganwadi Workers from Anganwadi Helpers etc.

World Bank sponsored projects under ICDS

1078. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received requests from the State Governments to sanction the World Bank sponsored projects under the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that these proposals are pending with Government for a long time;

(d) if so, the reasons for the delay in according sanction by Government; and

(e) by when final decision is likely to be taken in that regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATIRENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Ministry has received requests from a few States such as Orissa and Tamil Nadu for their inclusion in the proposed World Bank assisted Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)-IV Project. On the basis of a study conducted by the World Bank ***viz.*** 'Mapping and Profile of "Target" districts-India ICDS Program' for identification of "Highest ICDS Need Districts" and best practices experience of the States, 8 States have been identified for coverage under the proposed Project.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

Special Courts for trial of offences against women

1079. SHRI T.T. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken up the matter regarding setting up of special courts to try offences against women;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?